

CLAIMS

1. A method of producing a unique modified account name based on a requested account name that has been determined to already exist, the method comprising the steps of:  
selecting a word element from a list of word elements;  
combining the word element and the requested account name to produce a modified account name;  
comparing the modified account name with a list of existing account names to determine whether the modified account name is unique; and  
if the modified account name is unique, providing the modified account name to the user for acceptance.

2. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the word element is randomly selected from the list of word elements.
3. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the word element is an adjective.
4. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the word element is an affix.
5. A method as recited in claim 1, further comprising the step of producing a second modified account name based on the requested account name that has been determined to already exist, the second modified account name being produced by:  
randomly selecting a second word element from the list of word elements;

combining the second selected word element with the requested account name to produce the second modified account name;

comparing the second modified account name with the list of existing account names to determine whether the second modified account name is unique; and

if the second modified account name is unique, providing the second modified account name to the user for acceptance.

6. A method as recited in claim 1, further comprising the step of producing a unique seeded account name based on the requested account name, the unique seeded account name being produced by:

combining the requested account name with a numerical seed to produce a first seeded account name;

comparing the first seeded account name with the list of existing account names to determine whether the first seeded account name is unique; and

if the first seeded account name is unique, providing the first seeded account name to the user for acceptance.

7. A method as recited in claim 6, wherein the seed is a single digit number, the method further comprises the steps of incrementing the numerical seed by one if the first seeded account name is not unique, combining the requested account name with the incremented seed to produce a second seeded account name, comparing the second seeded account name with the list of existing account names to determine whether the second seeded account name is unique, and if the

second seeded account name is unique, providing the second seeded account name to the user for acceptance.

8. A method as recited in claim 6, wherein the numerical seed is a multi-digit number that is randomly generated.

9. A method as recited in claim 8, further comprising the steps of generating a second multi-digit numerical seed if the first seeded account name is not unique, combining the requested account name with the second numerical seed to produce a second seeded account name, comparing the second seeded account name with the list of existing account names to determine whether the second seeded account name is unique, and if the second seeded account name is unique, providing the second seeded account name to the user for acceptance.

10. A method as recited in claim 6, further comprising the steps of combining the requested account name with both an underscore and the numerical seed to produce a second seeded account name if the first seeded account name is not unique, comparing the second seeded account name with the list of existing account names to determine whether the second seeded account name is unique, and if the second seeded account name is unique, providing the second seeded account name to the user for acceptance.

11. A method as recited in claim 1, further comprising the steps of: randomly selecting two further word elements and combining them to produce a random account name;

comparing the random account name with a list of existing account names to determine if the

random account name is unique;

if the random account name is unique, providing the account name to a user for acceptance.

12. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein if the modified account name is not unique, the steps for producing the unique modified account name are repeated for up to a predetermined number of iterations until a unique modified account name is produced.

13. A method as recited in claim 5, wherein if the second modified account name is not unique, the steps for producing the unique second modified account name are repeated for up to a predetermined number of iterations until a unique second modified account name is produced.

14. A method as recited in claim 6, wherein if the first seeded account name is not unique, the steps of producing the unique first seeded account name are repeated for up to a predetermined number of iterations until a unique first seeded account name is produced.

15. A method as recited in claim 1, further comprising the steps of combining the requested account name with both an underscore and the randomly selected word element to produce a second modified account name if the first modified account name is not unique, comparing the second modified account name with the list of existing account names to determine whether the second modified account name is unique, and if the second modified account name is unique, providing the second modified account name to the user for acceptance.

*Claims*

16. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing the steps recited in claim 1.

17. A method of producing a unique random account name in response to a request by a user, the method comprising the steps of:  
selecting a first word element from a database including a list of word elements;  
selecting a second word element from the database;  
combining the first and second word elements to produce a random account name;  
comparing the account name with a list of existing account names to determine if the account name is unique; and  
if the account name is unique, providing the account name to the user for acceptance.

18. A method as recited in claim 17, wherein the first and second word elements are randomly selected from the database.

19. A method as recited in claim 17, wherein the first word element is an adjective and the second word element is a noun.

20. A method as recited in claim 17, wherein if the random account name is not unique, the steps for producing the unique random account name are repeated for up to a predetermined number of iterations until a unique modified account name is produced.

21. A method as recited in claim 20, wherein if the unique random account name is produced in fewer than the predetermined number of iterations, the method further includes the steps of:

selecting further word elements from the database;

combining the further selected word elements to produce a further random account name;

comparing the further random account name with the list of existing account names to determine

whether the further random account name is unique; and

if the further random account name is unique, providing the second modified account name to the user for acceptance.

22. A method as recited in claim 17, further comprising the steps of combining an underscore between the word elements to produce a second random account name if the first random account name is not unique, comparing the second random account name with the list of existing account names to determine whether the second random account name is unique, and if the second random account name is unique, providing the second random account name to the user for acceptance.

23. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing the steps recited in claim 17.

~~24.~~ A computer-readable medium having computer-executable components for producing a unique modified account name based on a requested account name that has been determined to already exist, comprising:

a user interface component for receiving an account name request;

a database component including a list of word elements and a list of existing account names;

a name generating component for selecting word elements from the list of word elements and combining the word elements with the requested account name to produce modified account names; and

a search component for comparing the modified account names with a list of existing account names to determine whether the modified account names are unique and, if the modified account names are unique, providing the modified account names to the user for acceptance.

25. A computer-readable medium as recited in claim 24, wherein the word elements are affixes.

26. A computer-readable medium as recited in claim 24, wherein the word elements are adjectives.

27. A computer-readable medium as recited in claim 24, wherein the name generating component randomly selects the word elements from the list of word elements.

28. A computer-readable medium as recited in claim 24, wherein the name generating component further produces a seeded account name based on the requested account name, the seeded account name being produced by combining the requested account name with a numerical seed, the search component comparing the seeded account name with the list of existing account names to determine whether the seeded account name is unique, and if the seeded account name is unique, providing the seeded account name to the user for acceptance.

29. A computer-readable medium as recited in claim 24, wherein the name generating component further produces a random account name by selecting two further word elements and combining them, the search component comparing the random account name with the list of existing account names to determine whether the random account name is unique, and if the random account name is unique, providing the random account name to the user for acceptance.

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